

HOME OFFICE ACTION AFTER OUR STORY ON SPASTICS REFUSED TAXIS

THE case of the spastics who were left stranded in the rain, because taxi drivers refused to carry them, has been taken up with the Home Office as a result of publicity in Spastics News. And the Under Secretary of State, Dr Shirley Summerskill, has said that the taxi drivers concerned were breaking the law.

As reported in our September edition, two residents from the Society's Buxton Centre, in Derbyshire, were left stranded in a thunderstorm at Fenchurch Street Station, in London, when no fewer than six taxi drivers turned them down.

Tommy Danino and George Hopkins, both in wheelchairs,

travelled unaccompanied to London, to attend a '62 Club function. Of course they suffered the usual indignity of travelling in the guards van, because British Rail make no provision for the handicapped.

At Fenchurch Street they were met by two police cadets, who made strenuous efforts to hail a taxi for them. One after the other, drivers refused them. Eventually The Spastics Society's own minibus was called out to pick them up.

After reading the story in Spastics News, Mr Frank Hooley, MP, acted promptly. He sent an account of what

happened to Dr Summerskill, who was extremely perturbed at the news.

The Home Office verified the reports by checking with the police cadets involved, and they made inquiries with British Transport Police.

'The statements received leave little doubt that the taxis concerned were plying for hire,' said Dr Summerskill in a letter to Mr Hooley. 'And accordingly they were under an obligation to accept this hiring.'

'Refusal of such a hiring by the driver of a London taxicab

is an offence under the Hackney Carriages Act 1853.'

She added that the offending drivers could be fined up to £10 and have their licences suspended. Unfortunately prosecution would be impossible in this case because the drivers concerned could not be identified.

Nevertheless, Dr Summerskill has received assurances from the Transport Police that the attention of officers at both Liverpool Street and Fenchurch Street Stations had been specifically drawn to the problem.

MR JOHN SLAZENGER, the Assistant General Secretary of the Taxi Drivers Association, said that it was by no means typical for drivers to refuse to take handicapped passengers. He said it was the first time he had heard of a case like it.

'I must stress on behalf of my 13,000 members that usually taxi drivers will go out of their way to help the disabled. Many of our cabs are used to take handicapped

kiddies, including spastics, to and from school.

'Every year 150 vehicles take the war disabled down to Worthing for the day. This has been going on for the last 26 years. And we help out with innumerable other charities involving disabled people.'

Mr Slazenger said many of his members had been quite upset by the story.

As a point of law he said that it was not an offence for a taxi driver to refuse to stop for a fare. It only became an offence to refuse a fare after negotiations had begun. And even then, only on journeys of less than six miles.

And he added that many of the newer taxis had narrower doors than the old ones, making it difficult to take on wheelchairs.



... and a
**Happy New
Year to
you too**

HAVING a wail of a time are the charity cats Barry John and Susie, who decided to take time off from their labours - at the Society's London HQ at Christmas to go carol singing. The result was diabolical. After long and loud renditions of such well-known favourites as 'Good Cat Wenceslas,' 'We Three Cats from Orient Are' and 'Hark the Herald Pussies Sing' it certainly wasn't a silent night. And all they collected was a few old boots. Our picture was taken by David King (16), a student who was helping out at the Park Crescent offices during his holidays. The two cats have plenty of experience of charity work. They came to The Spastics Society from the RSPCA.

New honour for Professor

THE head of the Paediatric Research Unit at Guy's Hospital (which is sponsored by The Spastics Society), Professor Paul Polani, has been given an award for his work. It's the Kenneth Craik Research Award from St John's College, Cambridge.

In return Professor Polani has given lectures and attended seminars at the University.

WE TELL OF ONE SPASTIC'S STRUGGLE AND ASK: Will '75 bring a better life for Marjorie?

Marjorie Chappell lives with her mother in a sub-standard old people's bungalow at Winterborne Stickland, not far from Blandford Forum, in Dorset. You are likely to come across her if you go to one of the many steam fairs held in that part of the country during the summer months. She will be manning a stall at which she sells the knitwear she produces.

The fact that Marjorie, now 42, can produce knitwear and hand woven cloth is itself remarkable. She is a very severely handicapped spastic. She cannot walk, she has very limited hand movements and she has speech difficulties as well.

But the garments she manufactures are beautifully produced. She makes no concessions to her

handicap on that score. They are bright, and patterned with original and cheerful designs which she works out herself. Not only that but they are cheap. A long-sleeved pull-over which I bought cost only £3, and I have discovered nothing in the shops so inexpensive.

The point is that Marjorie has built up a career for herself despite the authorities



MARJORIE CHAPPELL (left) and her mother, Mrs Gladys Chappell, sort through some of the knitwear which Marjorie produces.

whose business it should be to help her, not because of them. The help she has received has been minimal. The conditions under which she has been forced to exist bear more relation to the last century than to this.

'We would very much like

to be rehoused,' said Marjorie after I had been shown dark patches on the walls of the bungalow where the damp comes through. 'But there is nothing for us. Mother, of course, could go into an old people's flat—they're building

Cont. on Page 7.

TV millions see Joey's 'compelling' story



JOEY DEACON

THE BBC TV 'Horizon' film about spastic author Joey Deacon has received wide acclaim in the national press. 'A compelling hour' said the Sunday Times. 'Restrained and dignified' was the Daily Mail's comment.

Joey, whose story was first told in Spastics News in May 1971, has lived in St Lawrence's subnormality hospital, Caterham, for nearly half a century, unable to make himself understood, except by fellow-spastic Ernie Roberts. Inspired by the example of

Bill Howe, a spastic patient of Brookwood Hospital, Lancashire, who had published 'Crossed Wires' a few years earlier, they decided to write Joey's autobiography.

They enlisted the help of two other patients and the 'Horizon' film showed how the laborious task was accomplished. Ernie would interpret Joey's strangled speech, Michael wrote down the words and Tom, who cannot read, projected the story letter by letter on to a typewriter ('Y for Willie,' 'X for Oxo'). At the rate of three lines a day, they took almost 15

months to complete the work.

In the film, spastic actors played the part of Joey as a child and a young man—a brilliant stroke on the director's part. To quote Clive James, television critic of The Observer:—

'The show will probably win all the prizes that there are, and should. But for the technical feat of directing damaged actors, no prize could possibly meet the case. To see talent inside those ruined bodies and get it out was an act of imagination sufficient to leave the most jaded viewer staggered. . . . Joey, in his 20s and 30s, was

played by John Prasher, a chairbound athetoid with a severe speech defect, and Christopher Molesworth, a nine-year-old pupil of The Spastics Society's Wilfred Pickles school, was cast as the child.

Although Chris also has little speech, he is an accomplished actor who takes a leading part in the school's annual concert.

'I'm so proud of him,' Joey Deacon told Daily Express reporter James Davies, through his interpreter, Ernie Roberts. 'He's just like I was as a nipper—except that he has had a chance, thank God.'

Steaming up to greater success

LINCOLN Spastics Society will really be able to let off steam this year. For the past eight years its Steam Spectacular has been the Mecca of steam engine fanatics all over the country.

Previously the Spectacular has been held at Caenby Corner. But last year's event was so successful—25,000 people packed the ground—that the organisers have been forced to look for a bigger showground. This year the show will be held at the Lincolnshire Agricultural Society's Ground, three miles north of Lincoln. And it will now be known as the Lincolnshire Steam Spectacular.

'We have had to face the fact that Caenby Corner is no longer big enough to stage our event,' said the show's publicity officer Peter Brown. 'When we chose Caenby Corner for the first event in 1967 we had no idea just how successful it would become.'

'Well over 140,000 people have visited past rallies, and the last two years have seen the site almost bursting at the seams.'

The Steam Spectacular, which raises money for Lincolnshire spastics, will be held on August 16 and 17.



Flights of fund raising

THE St Giles' Ladies Darts League, Norwich, has presented £450 to Norfolk and Norwich Spastics Association. This brings to £2,652 the total raised by the league for spastics over the past 12 years. Centre of the picture is Mr Jim Tubby, who received the cheque on behalf of NANSAs. Members of the Darts League are, left to right, Miss Rose Girling, Mrs E. Sheppard, Mrs Gladys Hare and Mrs F. Hughes.

Riding couple honoured

A SPECIAL award has been presented by the Martini International Club, in conjunction with 'Light Horse' and 'Pony' magazines, to Keith and June Webb, who run the Diamond Riding Centre for the Handicapped, Carshalton, Surrey.

Spastics News had a feature in March 1974 about Keith Webb, the mounted policeman who raised £163,000 in five years to open a purpose-built riding centre for the handicapped.

Learning about music therapy

A WEEKEND course on 'Therapy in Music for Handicapped Children' will be held at Burgh House, New End Square, London NW3, on February 8-9 1975. Details from Miss S. Beresford-Pearse, Music Therapy Department, Goldie Leigh Hospital, Abbey Wood, London SE2 0AY.

Gift for Scots

COMING to the rescue once more, the Stars Organisation for Spastics (Scotland) have generously paid for a Bell & Howell automatic loading film projector costing more than £350. This will be used mainly by the Edinburgh Appeal Office for Spastics at fund-raising activities throughout Southern and Eastern Scotland.

How I went to South Africa —alone

I spent my most unbelievable Christmas holiday ever, when I flew unaccompanied to be with my youngest brother, Bob, and his family for a month in the Transvaal in South Africa.

Bob emigrated just over six years ago, after leaving the RAF with 24 years of service behind him, and I was staying with him at his home in Northamptonshire, having what I thought would be our last holiday together, when he received his flight schedules. I discovered he left London at about 6.30 pm and was due into Johannesburg before lunch the next day.

This set me off thinking, for there seemed to be no physical reason why I could not make the journey to visit Bob—if I could save the fare! I immediately started to make plans.

First of all, I decided to save as much money as possible and to cut out some luxuries and to set a target for having my holiday before my passport ran out in 1978.

But within a few months it was beginning to look a bit doubtful, for as fast as I was managing to save a few pounds, prices and fares were being raised. Then, out of the blue, things began to happen.

I had a phone call from the editor of the local evening paper, asking if it was true that I was trying to raise money to have a holiday with my brother in South Africa? I said it was, and he asked if

Spastics speak for themselves

TOM GAIR is a wheelchair-bound spastic who lives at a Cheshire Home in Northumberland, but he doesn't let his severe disabilities prevent him travelling the world. In a special article for Spastics News he tells how he spent Christmas in South Africa after everyone advised him he couldn't possibly make the journey alone. He told us: 'I have tried to prove that a lot of chair-borne disabled can take a normal holiday if they and their families and friends are determined enough to try.'

he could send a reporter out to get the full story. The result was that a straightforward little article appeared in the paper.

A few days later I was called to the phone to hear a friend tell me he had been approached by a lady who wished to remain anonymous, who would like to pay my air fare. This really staggered me, but I wrote off next morning to tell my bother and to ask him when it would be convenient to come out to him? Exactly a week later came his reply, weighing up the pros and cons, but finally asking me to join them for the Christmas and the New Year.

Then, of course, came the difficult time, when I had to try to convince everyone that I was quite capable of doing the 13,000-mile round trip by air unaccompanied. I was helped by this in the fact that I had already flown to Europe several times, visiting many different countries, though never by myself. I knew sufficient about the airlines to realise that they are really geared up to catering for the disabled and, of course, they did not let me down.

Eventually December 15 arrived, and a friend took me to Newcastle Airport, where I caught a plane for the 50-minute flight to Heathrow. I was met by a nursing sister and an ambulance. After collecting my luggage and folding wheelchair, she took me to the terminus where I was eventually to get the plane for Johannesburg. As I had about a seven-hour wait, the sister took me to the airport health department and gave me a room with a bed and easy-

chair and told me to rest there and she would see that I was at my plane in time. Soon afterwards, a hostess from South African Airways came to make sure I was all right and give me vouchers for lunch and tea, which the nurses collected for me.

The ambulance and a sister came to take me to the Jumbo-Jet, and I was hoisted up to the plane doorway, still in my wheelchair, and transferred into a plane seat by a nurse. I was handed over to the care of the purser, who was in charge of the cabin-staff of the plane. He brought a steward and stewardess to me and told me that if I wanted anything at all during the flight, I was to ask and they would do everything possible to see it was done. Although I really did not need anything they came to check that I was all right regularly throughout the flight.

It was a long journey, but we had two stops of an hour each, one at Frankfurt and the other in the Cape Verde Islands. The trip was uneventful, though I had two bitter disappointments. As we travelled through the darkness, I decided that, as I was next to the window, I would take some snaps of the dawn above the clouds, but when the time came I discovered that, not only had I forgotten to load my camera, but I had left the film at home. This was bad enough, for it was a beautiful sight, but worse was to come when we crossed the South West African coast, on a clear, cloudless morning, and there beneath us stretched miles and miles of

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Why Sandra was indignant

'How dare anyone deny us babies'

SANDRA HEFFERON was furious when she read letters in her local paper saying that spastic women shouldn't have children. 'How dare anyone deny a woman that?' she demanded.

And Sandra had a right to be indignant. Despite the fact that she is herself a spastic, without the use of her arms or legs, she is also the mother of a beautiful two-year-old baby girl.

'I dearly wanted a child, but from the first day I was pregnant it was a constant worry that my baby would be born with something wrong,' she said. 'But I prayed that it would be something physical rather than mental. After all, my husband and I have both coped with our disabilities.' But her fears were unjustified, and baby Julie was born without mental or physical handicap.

To encourage

Sandra told her story to the Birmingham Evening Mail because she wanted to encourage other disabled married couples who wanted children.

Being unable to use her arms presented problems for Sandra. For a start she couldn't hug her child like most mothers. Feeding was difficult, too. 'There was no health visitor, so I managed the best I could



PROUD parents Michael and Sandra Hefferon with baby Julie.

Picture by courtesy of Birmingham Evening Mail

by propping her up in a pram to feed her.'

Having a helpful husband makes life easier for Sandra. Michael is himself disabled, being paralysed down one side. But before setting off to work he helps his wife dress and makes sure that she and little Julie have everything they need for the day.

The couple live in a ground floor maisonette, which helps. And Sandra is able to do all her own cooking with the exception of a few jobs such as peeling potatoes.

She said that when Julie first arrived visitors used to peer into the pram expecting to see something wrong with the baby. 'Look how wrong they were,' she retorted.

His petrol pumps help scheme goes national

THE scheme set up by garage proprietor Mr Douglas Skeggs, to help disabled motorists, has snowballed. Mr Alfred Morris, Minister for the Disabled, brought the scheme to the attention of the Petroleum Retailers Association, which has decided to expand it nationwide.

As reported in September's Spastics News, Mr Skeggs was concerned at the problems faced by disabled drivers, now that so many garages were 'self service.' He decided to provide help for them at his chain of six garages, and displayed signs indicating the times at which help could be given.

On hearing about the scheme

—and drivers get extra £5

SOME of the sting has been taken out of the Chancellor's swingeing 25 per cent VAT on petrol, for disabled people. From this month their petrol allowance will go up from £5 a year to £10.

And the tax free allowance will be extended to cover all drivers of vehicles for the handicapped, provided by the Department of Health and Social Security. About 34,000 people in all will benefit.

The Secretary of State for Social Services, Mrs Barbara Castle, told the Commons: 'To cover the extra cost of petrol, we propose to double the £5 a year petrol allowance now paid to some drivers, and to extend the allowance to all drivers of invalid vehicles and cars provided by the Health Departments. This allowance is tax free. Payments at the £10 rate will begin to be made as soon as administratively possible, that is January.'

the Petroleum Retailers Association were quick to take action. They realised that self service pumps could be a real threat to Britain's 50,000 disabled drivers, many of whom rely solely on their vehicles to get about.

Now members of the PRA are being asked to buy new distinctive red and blue signs, bearing both the international sign for disabled people and the emblem of the PRA.

The signs will indicate that help is available for filling up with petrol, topping up batteries, checking oil and so on. Cards will also be provided by the garages for disabled people to display on their vehicles, to indicate that they need help. Garages which can undertake servicing and repair work on vehicles driven by the disabled will also display this information.

Standards

The PRA says that in order to ensure the highest possible standards, members taking part in the scheme would be asked to sign a declaration that they fully understand the responsibility they are taking on. And that in the event of a dispute between themselves and a disabled motorist which they cannot resolve, they will submit to independent arbitration.

Oil companies have been circularised and asked to co-operate in the scheme, and the PRA hopes that even non-members will take part.

Sadly, that 'little red tag' tale isn't worth a light

HERE'S a tip from a cigarette company. The story that red lifting tags can be exchanged for cash isn't worth a light.

The rumour filtered through to Mr P. Barrett, of the Midland Spastics Association, and thinking there's no smoke without fire, he took the matter up with W.D. and H.O. Wills, manufacturers of Embassy cigarettes which were said to be making the tag tag offer.

A company spokesman quickly extinguished the rumour, which he said was causing distress and embarrassment.

Charitable co-operation at new shop

THE Central Council for the Disabled's new premises at 86 York Street, London W1, is good news for Spastics News. For the Council has agreed to sell The Spastics Society's complete range of publications from the new headquarters, including of course this newspaper.

The building has the advantage of an eye-catching shop window, ideal for displaying books and journals. Some of the titles to go on show will be 'Art and Cerebral Palsy,' 'Personal Relationships, The Handicapped and the Community,' and 'Teaching the Cerebral Palsied Child.'

How their money was spent



MR DENNIS ROSE, Chairman of the Barrow and District Spastic and Handicapped Children's Society, explains the mechanics of a multi-variable chair to Christine and Colin White. The fund-raising efforts of the two children helped towards the purchase of the chair, which will be used at the day centre run by the group at Barrow-in-Furness.

Picture by courtesy of North Western Evening Mail

'Best pub' people help workers

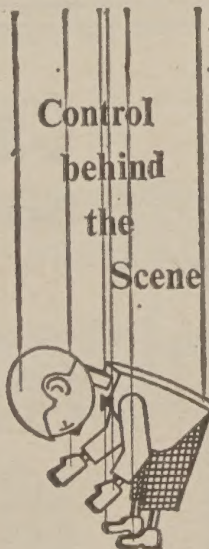
CUSTOMERS of the Eagle pub at Neatishead on the Norfolk Broads raised £305 for the Norfolk and Norwich Spastics Society over a period of 18 months. The money will pay for a machine providing work for three people at the group's work centre in Norwich.

The Eagle's landlord, Mr Norman Wakeham, has double cause for celebration, as his pub, for the second year running, won the Broadland 'small pub of the year' competition.

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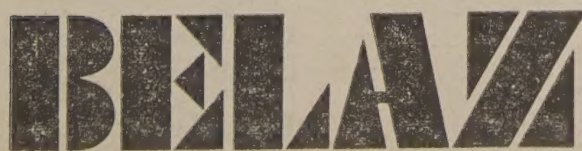
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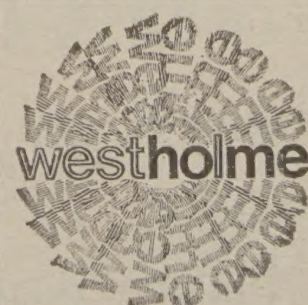
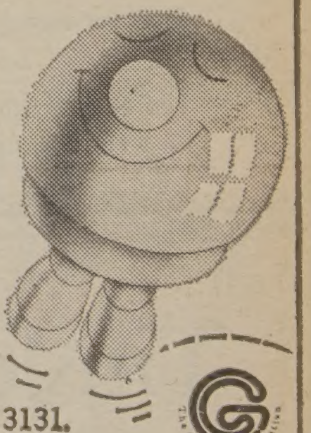
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Majorcan memories to cheer an English winter

FINGERS had been hopefully crossed in the Society's Holidays Section in the hope that no more trouble would befall the package tour industry, and it was with great relief that a coachload of 34 optimistic spastic holidaymakers, with nine wheelchairs and nine assorted helpers in the care of David Branch and Joyce Lavender, Clubs Officers, left the Family Services and Assessment Centre, Fitzroy Square, London, for Gatwick Airport and Majorca. The deluging rain did nothing to dampen spirits and once aboard the plane, England and its dreary climate were soon forgotten.

There was some ribald conjecture on who actually prepared the trays of terrible plastic food the airlines dispense to their captive guests, as helpers bumped bottoms with air hostesses in the narrow gangway of the plane (not exactly an unpleasant sensation the fellows admitted), in their efforts to feed people who needed assistance, but at least the coffee was very welcome.

A good flight with breathtaking glimpses of the snow-capped Pyrenees brought us to Palma where the temperature was a perfect 75 degrees. Soon lilywhite English skins were offering themselves up to the Spanish sun round the hotel's exotic swimming pool, while well iced drinks clinked in cool glasses. Those who had the inclination and energy to walk for five minutes preferred the beach, but one had to be up early to stake a good space. However, sheer force of numbers and exuberance usually won us the day—the Others didn't really stand a chance.

The courier raised his eyes to heaven when we booked for the excursion to Valdemosa, but to our strong wheelchair pushers the steep cobbled hill up to the Monastery was no problem, and everyone enjoyed the Majorcan folk dancing display, the wonderful view over that lovely countryside, and gazed

in wonderment at Chopin's very own piano.

Two night clubs featured on the programme and there was some consternation when on the first occasion a spectacular tropical storm broke just as the party was about to leave for a night spot. Several unsuspecting hotel guests were one minute quietly enjoying an after-dinner drink at the bar and the next found themselves sitting in their cars operating a taxi service for 43 people, wheelchairs and all, through a monsoon deluge. Operation Thunderstorm was a great success and the bubbly champagne and earthy flamenco dancing soon dispelled any dampened spirits. Some German friends even turned up at 3.0 am to ferry us back again, so they had obviously enjoyed being press-ganged 1974 style!

When the sun went down the dancing in the hotel was always very lively, and on the last Saturday everybody, but everybody, danced. In wheelchairs, out of wheelchairs, with each other, with the helpers and with many of the other hotel guests who were only too keen to share in our fun. There were many friendships made that week with the other guests, addresses exchanged and promises of reunions to come. One wondered why it could not happen so easily in Britain. Perhaps it had a lot to do with the attitude of our marvellous helpers who, apart from their tireless attention to the personal needs of the holidaymakers, gave everything they had to ensure that the members of the party had a perfectly normal holiday just like anyone else—as they should

For details of next year's group holiday programme please contact Miss Denise Stroud, the Holiday Officer, at 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ.



Remember Christmas?

THE Mayoress of Hastings, Mrs Kitty Funnell, right, visits a stall at the Christmas bazaar run by the East Sussex Spastics Society. With her are group chairman Mrs C. A. Grant, second from right, and two stallholders. The event raised over £300 for group funds.

Picture by courtesy of Hastings Observer

Tractor gift for Kyre Park

RESIDENTS and staff at Kyre Park Centre had a problem. There are about 30 acres of beautiful woodland at the centre, but so overgrown that the 45 severely handicapped spastics there cannot enjoy the use of them.

So a group called the Marlpool Group was formed specifically to raise money for a tractor, so that the grounds could be cleared. And the culmination of their efforts came when, at a recent event at Kyre Park, the tractor was handed over.

Getting their teeth into dental problems

HANDICAPPED people are not getting the dental care they need and deserve. Who says so? The British Dental Health Foundation.

The organisation was set up three years ago to help educate the public on how to maintain good dental health by regular visits to the dentist and keeping to an effective daily oral hygiene routine.

Now the BDHF is getting its teeth into the handicapped section of society. It claims that handicapped people, whether living at home or in special units, are given no information by a doctor or dentist on how to keep a healthy mouth.

To help them spread the

good word, the Foundation is seeking information from handicapped people. It wants to know if they've experienced any difficulty in finding a dentist prepared to treat them. If they have any difficulty in getting to a dentist's surgery? Has a dentist ever visited them in their homes? And have they ever been given help in carrying out an oral hygiene routine in their homes?

Anyone who wishes to give information can get in touch with the Administrative Secretary of the BDHF, Miss Elizabeth Elliott, at 3 Harcourt House, 19a Cavendish Square, London W1. All information, they promise, will be kept in strictest confidence.

Matching up in wheelchairs

FOOTBALLERS from well-known clubs took to wheelchairs recently for a series of games against pupils of the Society's Thomas Delarue School, Kent. It was the sixth annual meeting between the school and the Surrey Football Coaches Association.

The coaches brought along several members of the Arsenal Club (George Armstrong, Peter Simpson, Fred Street, physiotherapist, and Bobby Campbell, coach), together with Gordon Jago, former manager of Queens Park Rangers, and Brian Moore, vice-president of the Surrey Coaches Association. After a play-off game of wheelchair hockey, the visitors took the trophy, which was won by the school last year.

Library scheme seeks helpers

VOLUNTEERS are wanted in the Chesham and Great Missenden areas of Buckinghamshire to help get a new library delivery scheme for handicapped and housebound people under way.

The volunteers will be asked to collect books from the libraries regularly, and to deliver them to people who are unable to get to the libraries themselves. If the pilot schemes are a success, the project will be expanded.

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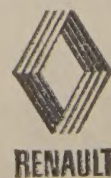
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A WINNING smile from Miss Strong of Neath, as she receives the keys for her brand new Vauxhall Viva from Gareth Edwards. The presentation took place at the Angel Garage, Neath, Glam.



JOHN SWAIN accepts a Vauxhall Viva car on behalf of his father, Herbert Swain, of Wolverhampton, from John Junkin (right). The presentation of this first prize in the Motor Show Competition was made at Attwood Garages Ltd, Wolverhampton. Also pictured, on the left, Area Supervisor ST83, Mr C. T. Taylor.

Young helpers raise cash for Cardiff

A SMALL group of children in South Wales is constantly thinking up new ways of raising funds for the Cardiff and District Spastics Association. They are Sian, Rachel, Louise and Miles of Cyncoed, and their latest contribution of £2.50 has just reached the Group headquarters. This money represents the proceeds of a Hallowe'en party held last autumn in the garden shed at Sian's home. The children said that they decorated the shed with witches, brooms, and cauldrons, and played creepy sound effects which they had taped.

There were 12 guests, each of whom paid 10p entrance fee. Hot dogs were sold at 6p each, with other refreshments free. There was also a raffle and a competition for the best fancy dress.

Death of Miss Lister

THE DEATH has occurred of Miss Hannah Lister, who was Chairman of St Margaret's School for Spastics in Croydon. Miss Lister, who was in her 80's, made a considerable contribution to the welfare of spastics in the Croydon area.

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MR AND MRS D. LOWE, of Nottingham, receiving the first dividend cheque of £1,326.45 from Area Supervisor Mr W. D. Taylor.

Subscription scheme set for success

A SUBSCRIPTION scheme was tested recently in Oxford and Ipswich with encouraging results. The scheme offers those members of the general public who, for one reason or another are unable to make contact with an

IT is felt that the subscription scheme will offer an alternative to the existing distribution network to people residing in areas where the company's collector representation is small.

The response from existing members who lose contact with their collector is also encouraging and means that supporters who otherwise would have been lost, may continue to support the largest charity pool in the country.

Splashes from the Spastics Pool

official collector, the opportunity of supporting the Spastics Pool by paying subscriptions direct to Head Office. Potential members have a choice of paying every 12 weeks, 6 months or one year in advance.

THE Society's bookshop has received an order for 24 books, addressed to: The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London, Ontario, CANADA.

The order, posted in Michigan, USA, on November 18 1974, had reached Park Crescent by December 3.

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Collector has raised over £10,000

SINCE his appointment as an official collector for the Spastics Pool in 1958, Mr A. W. Cardoza, of Sidcup, Kent, has raised the staggering sum of £10,250 for charity. Now 75, he travels from his home in Hurst Road, Sidcup, to the City of London four or five days a week to make his collection. It means an early start and a long day to cover the square mile of the City of London.

Most of his members are employees of the National Westminster Bank. Before his retirement, Mr Cardoza was a Bank Messenger.

His weekly ritual of travelling up to town on the train was only interrupted by a rail strike, but the Bank stepped in and made arrangements for him to travel by coach to enable him to continue his collection.

For 61 years, Mr Cardoza worked in the City of London and served with the City's Police Reserve for 13 years. His loyalty was rewarded on February 4 1974, when he was made a Freeman of the City of London.

Honour for Bill Paton

FOLLOWING the birth of his spastic son Richard, Mr Bill Paton really threw himself into working for cerebral palsy sufferers. He became a member of the first ever executive committee of the National Spastics Society, and for 22



years he was secretary of the Swansea and District Spastics Association, of which he is now Chairman. His work has won him the MBE, which he was awarded on December 3. Bill—who for 50 years has been sports editor of the Swansea Evening Post—is pictured outside Buckingham Palace after the presentation.

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Independence is a lesson they enjoy learning

Necessity has been the 'mother of invention' at the Society's Thomas Delarue School at Tonbridge, Kent, and it has produced a completely new way of life for sixth form students.

Because of an influx of pupils from the Wilfred Pickles School and Craig y Park this term, there was an urgent need for more accommodation. But instead of just building a new dormitory, it was decided to convert a domestic science block into a unit which would give the students a much more independent way of life.

'And it's working extremely well,' said Mr

Preston Fairweather, one of the teachers involved with the new scheme. 'The students have responded admirably.'

The new block has been named the Davies Block by the students themselves, after the school's first headmaster. The 10 boys and girls who occupy the block have their own bedrooms, to which they can retire if they wish to study, play records, work on their hobbies, and so on.

But they also have a spacious common room, with a galley so that they can cook a meal or make a cup of coffee whenever they wish. Bathroom and toilet facilities are also incorporated in the new block, so

that the new students are almost entirely self contained.

'We thought at first that this might tend to cut them off from the rest of the school,' said Mr Fairweather. 'But because the new unit is attached to the main school building, the students mix with the rest of the school, and take part in school events, as much as ever.'

Preparation

'But this new level of independence is a marvellous preparation for when they leave school. Most of the students in the block will go on to further education. And when they do they'll have to fend for themselves to a much greater degree than they do here.'

'This unit gives them a good



A QUIET place of your own to relax and study—Deborah Day makes the most of the new facilities.

to make sure no one's privacy is intruded upon. Lights must be out by a certain time, record players and radios turned off or switched over to earphones, students must be in at a certain hour, and so on.

At the moment the Davies Block is occupied by seven male and three female students. But it is designed so that the girls' section can be completely cut off from the boys to give them complete privacy. And if the proportion of boys to girls changes, the unit can be divided up accordingly.

'We are particularly pleased by the responsible attitudes our students have adopted since they moved into the unit at the beginning of this term,' said Mr Fairweather. 'They have adapted extremely well.'

The school is hoping to extend its policy of providing more independent accommodation for senior students. A Scandinavian designed single storey building in the school grounds is to be converted to form a cottage, with bedrooms, common room, bathrooms and so on, for senior students undergoing the newly introduced leavers' course at the school.



A MEASURE of independence for Anne Milnes.

opportunity to have a room of their own, cook for themselves and generally run their own lives to a certain extent. On Sundays they can even cook their own breakfast, and don't need to come in to the school at all.'

The students have drawn up their own set of rules for the Davies Block. And they are surprisingly strict, but designed



TAKING time off for a chat in their new common room are, left to right, Carole Matthews, Deborah Day, David Tyler, Michael Smart and Alain Gould.



WHAT'S cooking? Carole Matthews tries her hand at a few culinary arts, while Michael Smart is landed with the washing up.

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1975 guide to holidays

AS the days get shorter and the weather gets bleaker, more and more holiday advertisements creep into our newspapers to tempt us with sun, sea and somewhere different. And in past years The Spastics Society has printed its own booklet listing various hotels, guest houses and self-catering accommodation where physically handicapped guests are particularly welcome.

This year almost the entire booklet is being incorporated into a very comprehensive guide being published by the Central Council for the Dis-

abled called 'Holidays for the Handicapped 1975.' It provides information on all types of holiday accommodation suitable for handicapped people of all kinds, throughout the country. There is a section on holidays abroad, advice on travel arrangements, and addresses of useful organisations in foreign countries which may be able to help the disabled traveller.

The guide is on sale at W. H. Smith and Sons, priced 20p. Or it can be obtained direct from the Central Council for the Disabled at 34 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PE,

A very special school where integration really works

by PETER COOK

WHEN it comes to education the word 'integration' presents something of a dilemma. On the one hand most people agree that, ideally, handicapped children should not be segregated but sent to normal schools. On the other hand, we are forced to admit that a child with serious mobility problems, who needs hours of physiotherapy and other treatment every week, would find it almost impossible to survive in most of our overcrowded, understaffed, pandemonium-filled State schools.

But tucked away in London's Bethnal Green is a school where integration really does work. Nearly 40 of the 320 children are handicapped, either mentally or physically.

There are spastics, a blind boy, a psychotic girl, a mongol, several dislexic children, even a super-intelligent child with an IQ of 170.

The Headmistress of the Gatehouse Centre of Learning, Mrs Phyllis Wallbank, who started the school more than 25 years ago with £12 and eight children, does not regard any of her children as being handicapped. 'We are all unique in one way or another,' she says.

Mrs Wallbank did not begin the school as an exercise in integration. 'That just happened,' she said. 'First a polio victim joined us, then a mongol boy.'

'We once had a child sent to us who had been confidently diagnosed as deaf and severely subnormal. That boy later went on to win a scholarship to Eton and later to Cambridge. He is now a research physicist.'

Flexible

The reason why integration works so successfully at the Gatehouse Centre — which, incidentally, takes children from two to 16 years—is that the system is so flexible. Children do not attend formal lessons. They are not regimented into specific classes.

Instead, each child has a time-table which is marked up with a set number of lessons for each day. When and how the lessons are completed is up to the child. The teachers remain in their own particular teaching areas, and the children seek them out as and when they need help.

Because there are no formal lessons, it is impossible to miss one. If a child has to take an hour or two off for therapy, then there is opportunity to catch up and the child does not fall behind in his or her work.

And the system seems to work. Instead of the chaos which you might expect, the school appears a hive of activity as you walk round. There is noise, yes. But not the indiscriminate shouting of bored and discontented children. More the busy buzz of boys and girls seeking out information and putting it to use. 'It's a system which is exhausting for the staff,' said

Mrs Wallbank. 'But the children respond to it very well.'

It also allows for a more personal relationship between pupils and staff. Instead of the tutor addressing about 35 blank faces at once, each child is making his or her own individual demands of each teacher.

Mrs Wallbank is careful to see that any child who is handicapped in any way gets one to one counselling from a member of staff for at least half-an-hour each day. And by handicapped she does not just mean physically disabled or mentally retarded. Any child with a problem is included.

Needless to say the Gatehouse school does not come under the State system. But the fact that it is fee paying does not mean that it draws children only from the middle class income bracket. Some are sponsored by their local authorities.

Blind boy

One of these is a little boy who was left totally blind after an operation to remove tumours from his eyes. His local authority had insisted on sending him away to a residential school. But the parents resolutely opposed this. After suffering the traumas of undergoing long operations and of losing his sight, he was not going to suffer the additional cruelty of being wrenched from the security of his family, they determined.

'Now he happily walks about this school as easily as the sighted children,' said Mrs Wallbank. 'The children are always ready to help.'

Music

Another boy at the school is dislexic. He was unable to read a note of music when he first arrived. But he could play the piano brilliantly. At the Gatehouse school he was encouraged, and he is now even learning to read music. In a more conventional set up, his natural ability might well have been squashed because of his inability to progress through the normal channels.

A great deal of emphasis is placed on encouragement at the Gatehouse Centre. Good work is praised openly. There is no trace of the derisive attitudes which prevail in many State schools. Competitiveness is played down. Above all it gives every impression of being something which could almost be thought of as a contradiction in terms—a happy school.

Success for Fitzroy fund-raisers

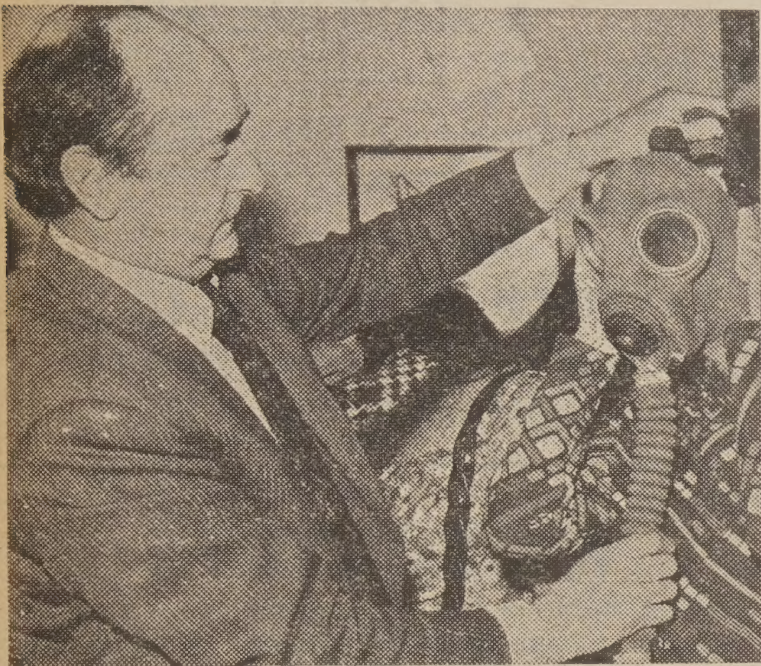


'GOING once! Going twice! Sold to the lady in the Information Department!' Jack McManus, the Society's Senior Placement Officer, takes on a new role as auctioneer at the Christmas Fair.

THE staff at The Spastics Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre, at Fitzroy Square, London, turned fund raisers in December, when they staged a Christmas Fair.

And very successful they were too. The Fair raised nearly £400 which will go towards helping spastics.

There were a variety of stalls, as well as competitions, a tombola, an auction and you could even buy your lunch there, which was useful for the Society's headquarters staff at nearby Park Crescent who packed the fair — many of them buying back the goods they had donated in the first place.



EVERYONE agreed that The Spastics Society's Christmas Fair was a gas—but this is ridiculous. Dr Donald Gough, the Society's Consultant Psychiatrist, discovered this war-time gas mask at the Fair, and couldn't resist trying it out on Rose Carroll, the Administrative Officer at Fitzroy Square.



FIVE-YEAR-OLD Eric Elston digs deep into the tombola with a little help from his mother, Mrs Margaret Elston, and Mr Philip Dyer, Deputy Head of Social Work and Employment.

Your letters

Away with 'useless' sponsored events

I FEEL I must write and compliment the Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics on its scheme for a sponsored 'clean-up' campaign in Stirlingshire (Spastics News, November) and hope that everyone hoping to raise money for charity will follow this sensible example.

Everyone I speak to is sick and tired of being asked to sponsor useless activities, and I have vowed that I will sponsor no more walkers, jumpers, knitters, singers, skippers, or marathon madnasses of any kind, however good the cause. To my mind it is a waste of energy which could be put to better use, but I would willingly and generously sponsor anyone who wants to clear away litter from our towns and countryside.

While we are on the question of sponsored anything, I find the involvement of spastics and other disabled people in these events quite disgraceful. I have seen them being pushed in wheelchairs round and round sports grounds or from one town to another in efforts to raise money, and I find the sight tasteless in the extreme. Surely the able bodied can do the money raising for them?

'Voluntary group member,'
Name and address
supplied.

Patricia's progress

REF your review of Glen Doman's book, 'What to do about your brain-injured child.' We are parents of 17-year-old Patricia, who is brain-injured. Her symptoms bring blindness, ataxia (can't walk), speech problem, hearing problem, epilepsy. Patricia has been doing the Doman-Delecatto therapy with the Lamrick House, Regeley, Clinic, for 12 months now, and has shown progress towards normality in all these symptoms. She still has a long way to go, but we are prepared to help her.

Alan and Margaret
Thwaites,
Langden House,
Dunsop Bridge,
Elitheroe,
Lancs BB7 3BH.

Generous Glasgow

THE annual Christmas sale in Glasgow in aid of spastics, organised by Rex King-Clark, West of Scotland Regional Officer, this year realised £237 compared with £124 in 1973. Among the visitors were Lady Gray, wife of the Lord Provost, and Bill Tennant, STV personality.

Kindness makes up for mean theft

VAL WALSH, 21, a resident of the Rockingham Spastics Hostel, Greasborough, Yorkshire, is a keen music fan and it was a cruel blow when a case containing her favourite records was stolen from the hostel.

The case was later found in a field by local schoolboys Mark Bingham and Shaun Steer, but most of the records had been damaged. Mark's father, Mr Brian Bingham, organist at the Rockingham Arms, Wentworth, decided to make good the loss. With the help of licensee Mr David Chew and village newsagent Mr Harry Turner, he organised competitions at the pub which raised £60.

A cheque for £20 enabled Val to replace her damaged records, while the rest of the money was spent on a dartboard and a Christmas party for residents at the hostel.

Picture shows Mark and Shaun, right, handing over a cheque to Val Walsh. Also in the picture are landlady Mrs Susan Chew, Mr Bingham and Mr Turner.

Picture by courtesy of Rotherham Advertiser

A better life for Marjorie in 1975?

(From Page 1)

some nice new ones now—but that would mean I would have to go into a home. And I don't want to go into a home.

'Besides, I couldn't be separated from Marjorie now,' said 68-year-old Mrs Gladys Chappell. 'I've looked after her for 42 years. It's become my whole way of life. If I hadn't looked after her and she'd been taken into a home it would have cost the authorities thousands of pounds. Surely it's not asking too much to be given a decent place to live now?'

The bungalow is small with two bedrooms, a bathroom, a sitting room and oddly enough a kitchen without a kitchen sink. That has been situated in an alcove off the living room so that boiling saucepans must be carried from one room to another to be strained. A hazardous task for Mrs Chappell who suffers from a complaint which affects her sense of balance.

Because the house is damp they have had to install expensive heaters for which not a penny has come from the local authorities. They wanted the front door widened so that Marjorie's wheelchair could be pushed through, and a ramp built.

'But the council refused because the didn't want to spend money on a sub-standard property,' said Mrs Chappell. 'When the man from the council came to look at the building I asked him what I was supposed to do. He told me I could wheel Marjorie up to

the front door, then tip her out on to the floor. I could then go round to the back door to get into the house, and come down through the passage way to reach Marjorie again and help her to her chair. I ask you!'

'I asked to be given a telephone,' said Marjorie. 'After all, if anything happened to mother I would be trapped here. The nearest public telephone is half a mile away. But my request was turned down on the grounds that I could crawl as far as the front gate.'

'On one occasion mother was taken ill. She couldn't get out of her bed for four days. I had no way of contacting anyone. I tried to get out to a neighbour's but the children were coming out of school and they began to make fun of me because I am a spastic. I was stuck for four days. I couldn't even turn the heating on so there was nothing for it but for me to go to bed as well.'

Eventually they had the telephone installed at their own expense. And now the local authority has agreed to pay the rental, as it is bound to do under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons' Act.

Teaching herself to use a knitting machine was a major triumph for Marjorie. It took her a whole year to master it. But she won through in the end thanks to the kind of obstinate perseverance which she has shown since quite a small child.

Her mother was at first told by doctors that Marjorie was

mentally retarded, and that she would never sit up, walk or talk. 'You might as well put her in a home,' they said.

Like so many parents of spastics children, Mrs Chappell followed her own instinct instead of the doctor's advice, and was proved right. By the time she was five Marjorie was cycling the four and a half miles to Winterborne, to convince the local headmistress that she was sufficiently mobile to go to school. At 23 she was refused a grant for an electric chair. So she bought one herself and passed the driving test within 11 weeks. All this time her mother was running a 53-acre farm single-handed as well as coping with her severely handicapped daughter.

'But watching her trying to master that knitting machine made me cry,' said Mrs Chappell. 'I couldn't stay in the room and watch, it demanded so much effort. I used to look in through the window to see how she was getting on and I just had to turn away again.'

'I bought the knitting machine on the off chance because I thought it was something I could do,' said Marjorie. 'It cost me £50 but it was worth it. I can sell everything that I make. Mostly I sell the garments at steam fairs, fetes, open days and so on.'

'You see I just aim to make enough money to keep my car going. Without a car I can't get out at all. If I was a little bit less handicapped and could drive, the Government would supply me with a car, and a free road tax licence and I

would get the mobility allowance. But because I can't drive and mother has to chauffeur me everywhere, I get nothing at all. It doesn't make sense.'

Marjorie is also disappointed that her garments are not sold in Spastics Shops. She admits that transport costs might make it a non-viable proposition economically. 'But the Society's supposed to help people like me. If I was in one of their centres it would cost a great deal more,' she said.

The lack of facilities for disabled people in and around Blandford has outraged Marjorie and her mother. 'It said in the local paper that the new public convenience in the town would have special facilities for the disabled,' she said. 'Marvellous, we thought. But we found that you couldn't get a wheelchair to the cubicles for disabled people, and the cubicle itself was much too small for two people to get inside. The only concession to the handicapped seemed to be a handle on the wall to help you get up. We wrote to the council pointing this out and they wrote back and said they would bear it in mind for future reference.'

'There are very few public buildings I can get into in this town. That includes the Church, the Town Hall, the library and even the hospital. Incidentally, they won a prize for the design of the library. I am a very keen swimmer but you can't get a wheelchair into the new swimming pool they've provided. The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons'

Act seems to have passed by this area.

'They're very good as far as the mentally handicapped and old people are concerned. I have known perfectly intelligent spastics attend workshops for the mentally handicapped. After a while their minds stagnate.'

Life is a little better now for Marjorie and her mother. They do have a home help visit them five days a week. They do have their telephone. And thanks to their own strenuous efforts, they do have a car which is costing more and more to run.

But they are still forced to accept a standard of living which falls tragically and drastically short of that which the most meagrely paid able bodied person would accept.

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In-depth study on spastics' problems

A GRANT of £8,000 over two years has been made by the Leverhulme Trust to the Scottish Council for Spastics to finance a study in depth of the employment of spastics and the difficulties met by handicapped young people trying to establish themselves in the life of the community.

Heading the project will be Mrs Margaret B. Davidson, of Grange Loan, Edinburgh, who for the past 18 years has taught secondary classes at Westerlea Residential School for Spastics, Edinburgh. Aiding the project as a consultant will be Miss Megan Browne, until last year senior lecturer in the Department of Social Administration at Edinburgh University, and Miss Margaret McAllister, who was warden of Westerlea for 25 years and who has a wide knowledge of young spastics' needs.

Mrs Davidson said she proposed to contact some 90 young people who had been taught at Westerlea, whose parents and homes she knew and with whom she was regularly in touch, but the in-depth study would be confined to about 20.

'Some of these young people have succeeded in finding work or entering upon a career, but I should like them to tell their own stories, explain their difficulties, air their grievances and tell of their triumphs. The difficulties of the young handicapped are far more intense than those faced by others, but I have been constantly challenged and humbled by their courage,' said Mrs Davidson.



HOSTEL residents get together in one of the sitting rooms at the Fitzroy Square Centre. They are, left to right, Barbara Dawson, Clive Trevelyan, Lorna Appleyard, Michael Scaife, Gillian Harris, Kenneth Baxter, Valerie Welch and Linda George.

Hostel residents took home some new ideas

A THREE-DAY conference for residents living in hostels run by The Spastics Society was held in November at the Family Services and Assessment Centre in Fitzroy Square.

Taking part were Lorna Appleyard and Gillian Harris from the Kingston Adult House Unit; Kenneth Baxter and Linda George from the Southampton Hostel; Joyce Coles from the Cardiff Adult House Unit; Barbara Dawson, Michael Scaife and Clive Trevelyan from the Snakes Lane Hostel, Woodford; and Desmond James

and Valerie Welch from Penarth.

The conference enabled delegates to meet people from other parts of the country, see a little of London and take home some fresh ideas on a variety of topics.

The programme included a visit to the BBC radio studios to watch a recording of 'My Word,' a bus trip round the main tourist attractions of London, and a showing of one of the Society's films on work centres. There was also an 'introduction to yoga' session, given by experts on yoga for the disabled, and two members of the Society's Holidays Section spoke about 'Making better use of your leisure time.'

Alastair Kidd, a social work assistant at the Fitzroy Square

Centre, gave a talk about his experiences of two very different types of community life—an Israeli kibbutz, where the aim is equality, and a summer camp for young people in America which encourages a competitive spirit.

In between these more general sessions, the delegates split up into small discussion groups. Topics used as a starting point for debate ranged from the disturbances in Northern Ireland, the permissive society and miners' wages, to 'Should we bring back the death penalty?' and 'Is a woman's place in the home?'

Plenty of sporting chances for spastics in 1975

SPORTING events planned by The Spastics Society for 1975 include wheelchair dancing, pony trekking, a gymkhana, sailing, and both area and national games.

The National Wheelchair Dance Festival will take place at the Hammersmith Palais on April 24 1975. The pony trek will be held in the Weald of Kent from May 19 to 23. Cost for full board and use of pony is £12 per head for the five days. Trekkers will live under canvas and will be expected to help with camp chores and with care of ponies and gear. The trek will be led by a fully qualified instructor and some help in the camp will be available. Trekkers are expected to supply their own riding hats, sleeping bag and personal toilet requisites.

Area games have been arranged as follows.—June 7: Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge; Sophia Gardens Sports Centre, Cardiff; Norton Manor Camp, Taunton; Lancaster Training Centre, Lancaster. June 14: Wilfred Pickles School, Duddington; Keswick Hall College, Norwich. June 18: The University Grounds, Newcastle. June 21: Dunfermline PE College, Edinburgh.

These will be followed by the National Games on July 19 and 20 at the Nottingham College of Education, Clifton, Nottingham.

The Gymkhana has been planned for September 23. Ponies will be supplied by the riding establishment at whose premises the gymkhana is

being held. The stable has more than 30 ponies which are regularly used by students and residents of some of the Society's schools and centres. It also looks after a few Spastics Society ponies.

The gymkhana will take place at Bradbourne Riding and Training Centre, Seal, Sevenoaks, Kent. There will be classes for all grades of riders and all classes of event.

It is hoped that there will be several sailing weeks available in 1975 for sailors of all classes from the beginner to the more experienced. Details will be announced later, but anyone interested in taking part is requested to contact the society's Physical Education Adviser as soon as possible (see address below).

A number of highly successful indoor meets were run in 1974, and the Physical Education Adviser would like to hear from any groups who would like to organise such an event locally. At least 40 participants are needed to make one of these a worthwhile venture.

It has also been suggested that a National Chess Competition would be of interest in 1975. Chess players who would like to take part are invited to write now.

Inquiries about all these activities should be sent to: A. T. S. Edwards, Physical Education Adviser, The Spastics Society, 8 Starvecrow Close, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9NW.

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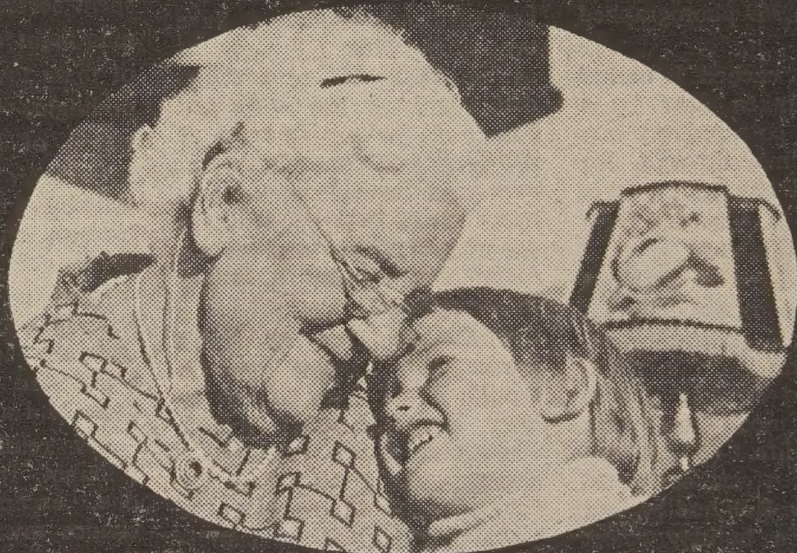
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Other pubs please note

JEAN and Ron Darby, licensees of the Reservoir Tavern, Brighton, hold up a bottle which was the subject of a 'guess how much' competition in aid of spastics. The contents of the bottle, plus the competition proceeds amounted to £65, collected in less than a year.

The Society hopes that other charitably-minded pubs in Sussex will follow this splendid example.

Picture by courtesy of Evening Argus, Brighton

New film probes job problems of disabled

FOR many of us, 'work' is among the least appealing of four letter words. Some of us will go to extraordinary lengths to avoid doing any. But take away the right to work and you take away freedom, independence, self-confidence and, of course, the means of obtaining a reasonable standard of living. Nothing is more demoralising than the inability to earn a living wage.

Yet there is a fairly sizeable section of society which is being denied

work. The reason? Because they are severely disabled.

The Spastics Society's latest film, 'The Right to Work,' which was premiered last month, pulls no punches in pointing out the many problems faced by disabled people who would rather work than live off social security.

There is a severely handicapped Welshman whose mobility is so restricted that he has to rise at 4 am in order to be ready in time to leave the house at seven to make the long journey to a nearby Remploy factory. After a strenuous five-day week his take home pay is £15 to £16.

There are severely handi-

capped but very intelligent students at The Spastics Society's Oakwood Further Education Centre, who wonder if after getting the degrees they're studying for they will end up weaving baskets.

And there is a disabled airport employee who bitterly attacks the Government for failing to provide incentives for industry to modify premises so that they can take on disabled people.

Mr John Hogger, the Manager of the Society's Miriam Harris Work Centre, says in the film that disabled people more than anyone need to work.

For many of them work is

the most important thing in their lives. They could not go out at night or take part in sporting activities or do many of the things most people take for granted. So that if they were employed, work took on a special importance.

He also made a strong criticism of Remploy, which, he alleged, did not employ the severely disabled because if they did so they could not keep up with their work schedules. Instead they took on many people who could easily be placed in open employment.

The film makes the point that with a very few alterations to factories and offices,

hundreds of people who are currently forced to live on Social Security could become tax payers. But in order to achieve this, there must be tremendous changes in attitudes.

'The Right to Work' was directed by Nigel Evans for The Spastics Society.

She's hooked on helping



SINCE she attended a ball in aid of the Stars Organisation for Spastics, Mrs Shirley Freeman, of Purley, Surrey, has become really hooked on crocheting. So much so that she spent 600 hours and 100 balls of cotton, crocheting this magnificent table cloth. It measures 100 inches by 70, and is made up of 285 inch squares. The reason Mrs Freeman undertook her mammoth project was so that she could do something positive to help spastics. She wants the tablecloth to be put up as a prize for a competition in aid of the SOS.



'Millions should see this' praises Minister

THE Spastics Society's latest film, 'The Right to Work,' should not just be seen by the specialists, but by the millions. These words came, not from the film publicists, but from the Minister for the Disabled, Mr Alfred Morris, when he attended the premiere in London.

Mr Morris said it was a hard hitting film, and he congratulated The Spastics Society which sponsored it, Randal Evans the people who made it, and the handicapped people who took part in it.

'Disabled people do not want to be regarded as a special case,' he said. 'They hate condescension.'

He added that the film showed that it made good economic sense to find employ-

ment for disabled people. If only they were given the right employment opportunities, many could become tax payers instead of recipients of social security.

'Mostly people tend to see the disabilities of physically handicapped people. This film gives us a chance to see their abilities.'

'It is a very important film. I hope it will be seen right across the country, and I shall certainly do everything I can to publicise it.'

Introducing the film, The Spastics Society's Director, Mr James Loring, said it was not just a statement of the Society's policy. The film highlighted an important need, not just for spastics but for disabled people in general. It would be pointless to campaign on the behalf of spastics alone, on issues where disabled people as a whole were involved.

'Prejudice'

Mr Loring said that thousands of people were being denied jobs just because they are disabled. 'They are being squeezed out by prejudice, misunderstanding and the failure of Government to take positive action.'

'There is a deplorable lack of understanding of the problems which face disabled workers, and of their capabilities. But managements will not take action to integrate the disabled into their industries until the Government provides concrete financial help.'

'As a result, many disabled people are being denied one of the most fundamental of human rights—the right to work. Or they are given only simple, repetitive jobs which fall well short of their capabilities. Some are even being exploited because of their readiness to accept menial jobs and poor pay through sheer desperation.'

Campaign

Mr Loring called for a national campaign to bring home to employers just what disabled workers can do, given the right help and opportunities.

At present the Government operated a quota system, under which employers with a work force of 20 or more had a duty to include three per cent disabled people. This statutory requirement dated from 1944 yet during the intervening 30 years only a handful of prosecutions had been brought against employers for ignoring a Parliamentary Act.

'The Quota Scheme has proved ineffective,' said Mr Loring. 'It is an almost impossible law to police, and it is too easy to by-pass. In fact,

To South Africa—alone

FROM PAGE 2

coastline, like a huge relief map. There were said to be 370 passengers on that flight and I reckon 369 photographed that scene!

When we reached Jo'burg I was again taken over by a hostess who collected my luggage, saw me through the customs and handed me over to my brother, who was waiting with his family.

I spent the rest of that day and the following one exchanging news and generally resting, then, Bob and his family took me away for what proved to be the most fascinating week of my life. As they live in a part of Africa not noted for its beauty, Bob had booked a chalet in a holiday resort some 250 miles away in Eastern

Transvaal, in the heart of the Drakenburg Mountains. For most of the time we just used this as a base for travelling around some of the most beautiful countryside I have ever seen—what I thought of as the 'real' Africa, with its dirt roads of the same red colour as the soil in most of the Transvaal, through forests, over and through mountains, never quite knowing what to expect around the next corner, except that it would be beauty in some form.

Christmas Day at Bob's home was spent quietly, though it did seem strange to have the traditional British Christmas dinner in such a climate. As it gets dark by 7.30 even in the summer, it seems that part of the festivities consists of every town and

city trying to outdo each other in illuminating their streets, and some would compete well with Blackpool or Margate. We spent several hours on Christmas night driving around five of these towns, finishing up at midnight, walking down the streets of Benomi, some five miles from home, and all I was wearing was a thin pair of trousers and an open-necked shirt.

Most of the rest of the holiday was spent in visiting different parts on a day-to-day basis, and we visited several game and animal reserves.

My return trip was little different from the outgoing one, except that by some chance my seat was right in the middle of a party of about 35 Germans, bound for Frankfurt, and whether they spoke English or not, they kept up the trip's record for friendliness—they could not have been kinder.

I might be criticised for spending most of my time in this article in talking about the journey and how it was arranged, and very little about South Africa. This was done deliberately. There are numerous travel books about, but I wanted to relate how I, a chair-borne spastic, was able to travel to South Africa and back, completely unaccompanied.

This, I think, is the big message I have tried to get across. I feel that a lot of disabled people are held back from holidays by fear—either on the part of their friends or themselves—that they cannot manage. To all these people I would say: 'Try it.' I have visited eight countries overseas and most parts of this country since the age of 40—and 'they' still try to tell me I cannot do it!

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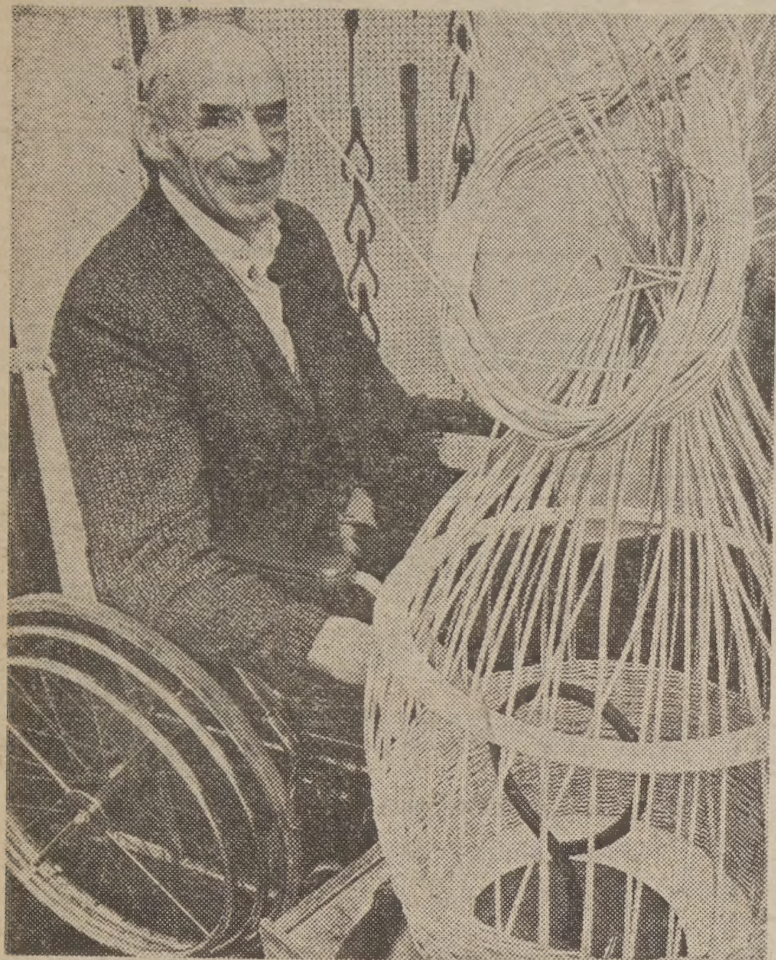
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Ted helps the export drive

TED CARPENTER, 57, of West Bromwich, Staffordshire, is pictured making his 592nd cane linen basket at the local social centre, which he attends five days a week. He has been making baskets for 16 years and they have been sold all over the world.

Mr Carpenter, a spastic, whose left hand is affected, weaves the cane using his mouth and right hand. It takes him 12 hours to complete each basket.

His other great interest is football, and when he was younger he used to hop on his one good leg all the way from his home to the West Bromwich Albion ground. With stops to rest every 100 yards or so, the journey would take him three hours each way. For 11 years he never missed a game, including Central League matches and midweek fixtures, but since 1954 has been unable to visit the ground.

'I couldn't hop 100 yards now,' he laughed.

However, one Saturday this

season he was able to watch a football match in style with a seat in the stand at the Albion ground and special transport there and back. The treat was arranged in appreciation for his record sales of Remembrance Day poppies.

Picture by courtesy of West Bromwich Midland Chronicle

Customs insist on 'pound of flesh' so parents pay higher prices

PARENTS of severely handicapped spastics throughout Britain are having to pay well over the odds for special therapy balls essential for the treatment of their children. All because HM Customs and Excise is insisting on its 'pound of flesh.'

The Spastics Society, through its Supplies Officer, Mr A. Mitchell, imports the balls from Carnago, in Italy, especially for the treatment of handicapped children. After extensive searches, the Italian balls were found to be most suitable for physiotherapy, and nothing similar is available in Great Britain.

'We have just replenished our stocks,' said Mr Mitchell, 'And once again

I am very dismayed at the VAT and import duty charges.'

Here is how the costs work out. The cost of 200 balls delivered free to the Italian border is £438.64. Freight by road and sea to England is £13.95. Port clearance, warehousing and delivery costs £17.50. UK import duty at 12 per cent amounts to £52.61. And value added tax at eight per cent amounts to £41.84.

The net result is that a 44 inch diameter ball costing £3 in Italy must be priced at £4.80 in England. And the 32 inch

ball is £1 more than the price in Italy.

Most of the additional costs are because of import duty and VAT.

Usually goods used specifically for the treatment of handicapped people are not subject to tax. But HM Customs and Excise says the therapy balls must be taxed, because they cannot be distinguished from ordinary large beach balls, which are chargeable.

Said a spokesman: 'The Commissioners are not unmindful of the needs of handicapped people, but as the goods are of such a character that they can be used by anyone as ordinary beach balls, it is regretted that no exemption from tax can be allowed.'

The value of these balls in treating spastics is emphasised by the Principal of the Western Cerebral Palsy Centre, who said: 'They are absolutely essential as a help in treatment and we would strongly recommend that they should be free of tax for this reason. They are not only supplied to hospitals, but also to parents for home treatment, some of whom cannot afford to pay very much.'

And Miss Nancie Finnie, whose book, 'Handling the Young Cerebral Palsied Child at Home' has been published in several languages, says: 'The balls are an ideal adjunct for the treatment of young cerebral palsied children. These balls are now universally used in the treatment of young handicapped children. As continuity of treatment is essential this means that many parents need to have such balls for treatment at home. The Spastics Society seems to be the only place in England where one can purchase such balls.'

Roy got to work in spite of strikes



ROY arrives at work—in spite of all difficulties.

FOR many commuters, the series of one-day strikes by workers on British Rail's Eastern Region was a good excuse for a day off work. But not for Roy Duminel, The Spastics Society's postal messenger at the Park Crescent Headquarters.

Despite the strike and his physical handicap, Roy made strenuous efforts to get to work. Leaving his home at Shenfield, Essex, at 7 am on the first strike day, he caught a bus to Ilford, after a long wait. At Ilford he had to wait an hour for the underground train to Liverpool Street, and then there was an half-hour wait before the Metropolitan line train arrived to complete the journey.

It was two o'clock by the time Roy got to work. But his troubles weren't over then. The return journey was equally fraught with hazard, and he arrived home at 9 pm. A 14-hour day.

There can be few people who would show such devotion to their jobs.

Director sees for himself



Busy Christmas for the SOS

THE run up to Christmas meant a busy time for the Stars Organisation for Spastics. It has been a time for parties, carol concerts, the annual ball and a major film premiere.

Petula Clark agreed to be the star at the SOS Carol Concert, which was held at the Royal Festival Hall on December 14. She flew in from engagements in Las Vegas to lead the singing.

There were two choirs, one comprising students from the Royal Academy of Music and the second boys from Trinity School, Croydon. Christmas stories were read by comedian Leslie Crowther and Jack Howarth, better known as Coronation Street's Albert Tatlock.

The concert was organised by show business writer and broadcaster David Wigg.

Another big occasion for the SOS was the Annual Ball held at the Grosvenor Hotel in London, which raised about £10,000. The Ball is the biggest regular event in the Stars calendar, and has been held for the past 20 years.

As usual the tombola was organised by Vera Lynn, and

this alone raised £1,852. The cabaret star was Jack Jones, with his orchestra.

Vera Lynn was also at a party for the residents and friends of Wakes Hall, held at Colchester Barracks. She led the sing-song there, and Jack Howarth told a story while Nerys Hughes of the Liver Birds recited from Under Milk Wood.

There was a party, too, for children at Colwall Court, the SOS holiday hotel at Bexhill-on-Sea. Once again Vera Lynn was there. And so was Francis Mathews (alias Paul Temple), who brought along his film projector to show Laurel and Hardy films.

From Paul Temple to James Bond, and the premiere of the latest Bond film, 'The Man with the Golden Gun' was held at the Odeon, Leicester Square, on December 18. The proceeds were shared between the SOS, the National Playing Fields Association and the Variety Club of Great Britain's Heart Fund.

Visit to Welsh centres

MR JAMES LORING, Director of The Spastics Society is pictured, second left, at the Cwmbran Work Centre during a tour of Society, local group, and local authority centres in Wales. With Mr Loring, getting down to the job of checking plastic door catches at the centre, are employees Bill Perrott and Ken Hopkins, and looking on is Mrs Clarrie Williams, founder and chairman of the Monmouthshire Spastics Society. Mr Williams is the group's treasurer.

After visiting Cwmbran and other centres in the area with Mr and Mrs Williams, Mr Loring went to Cardiff to the Society's hostel Brynawel, and also called in to meet the spastics at the Cardiff and District Spastics Association's day centre. After a tour of the Sully work centre, Mr Loring went to Craig-y-Parc School.

Staff raised the cash



A SMALL pupil of the White Lodge Spastics Centre, Chertsey, Surrey, demonstrates the centre's latest teaching aid—a touch tutor machine. The £1,000 required for the machine was raised in just five months by staff at the centre and their friends.

Picture with compliments of Surrey Advertiser